

PANAMA TR4 AND THE LAW

Biosecurity affects us all. We are united by the potential risk to our businesses, our communities, the environment and our health. In Queensland, the *Biosecurity Act 2014 (Act)* provides a framework for an effective biosecurity system. As a banana grower, you need to be aware of biosecurity laws that apply generally and in particular, in relation to Panama TR4.

Reporting signs of Panama TR4



13 25 23

Early detection is key to controlling Panama TR4. If you see any signs of disease, you have a legal obligation to report it.

Panama TR4 is category 1 restricted matter¹. Plants showing signs of disease must be reported to Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23 immediately and not more than 24 hours after becoming aware of the symptoms.

Failing to report Panama TR4 is a breach of your GBO and may attract a penalty of up to 750 penalty units or 6 months imprisonment.

1 As prescribed under Schedule 2 of the Act

What is the general biosecurity obligation (GBO)?

Under the Act an obligation is imposed on individuals and corporations to:

- Take all reasonable and practical steps to prevent or minimise a biosecurity risk.
- Minimise the likelihood of the risk causing a biosecurity event and limit the consequences of such an event.
- Prevent or minimise adverse effects on human health, the economy, the environment and social amenity that could be caused by a biosecurity event such as Panama TR4.
- Not do anything that might worsen adverse effects on a biosecurity consideration.

In practical terms, this means that you should not touch or tamper with any plant if you suspect that it may have Panama TR4.

You should also take precautions to minimise the possible biosecurity risk by cordoning off and restricting access to any suspect infected plants until Biosecurity Queensland advise otherwise.

Failing to discharge your GBO may attract a penalty of up to 3000 penalty units or imprisonment up to three years.

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BIOSECURITY LEGISLATION

In Queensland

Biosecurity Act 2014

The *Biosecurity Act 2014* takes a risk-based approach to managing biosecurity threats in Queensland. It provides flexibility in the approach to managing a biosecurity risk that is, or is likely to become, a significant problem for human health, social amenity, the economy or the environment. A biosecurity risk exists with any pest, disease, weed or contaminant. This includes moving an animal, plant, turf, soil, machinery and/or equipment that could carry a pest, disease, weed or contaminant.

Biosecurity Regulation 2016

The Biosecurity Regulation 2016 supports the *Biosecurity Act 2014* and sets out how the Act is implemented and applied. The Regulation prescribes ways in which a person's GBO can be met to prevent or minimise a biosecurity risk. It includes measures to prevent or control the spread of biosecurity matter, sets maximum acceptable levels of contaminants in carriers, and sets fees.

Queensland biosecurity manual

The Queensland biosecurity manual prescribes the requirements for managing biosecurity risks. It's designed to simplify the process of determining what must be done to move risk items and provides risk minimisation requirements that must be followed. In relation to Panama TR4, the manual describes in detail the destruction process for Panama TR4 infected plants.

Other relevant information



Banana Industry Biosecurity Guideline

The Banana Industry Biosecurity Guideline provides advice to anyone that cultivates banana plants and covers the use of clean planting material, managing yellow Sigatoka and leaf speckle (leaf spot), controlling banana bunchy top virus and not planting pest banana species. More information can be found at abgc.org.au

Biosecurity Code of Practice

The Code of Practice aims to provide detailed guidance to growers where serious pests and diseases exist or affect the industry. This is separate to the Code of Practice specifically for properties with Panama TR4. Read more: abgc.org.au

Biosecurity zones

Queensland has several biosecurity zones established within the state to limit the spread of banana plant pests and diseases. Four zones have been established and cover the pests black sigatoka, Panama TR4, banana freckle, banana bunchy top virus, and Cavendish-competent Panama disease race 1. More information and biosecurity zone maps are available from dpi.qld.gov.au

Fruit consignment

Some intrastate or interstate markets may require additional quarantine certification as a condition of entry. It is the responsibility of the business consigning the produce to ensure compliance with all applicable quarantine requirements. Information on interstate requirements can be obtained from the plant quarantine service in the destination state or territory.

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AFTER A DETECTION

If Biosecurity Queensland knows or reasonably believes there is a significant risk that Panama TR4 is present on land or in/on a plant, a Restricted Place Declaration (RPD) will be made and a Notice given to the owner or occupier of the land.

RPDs are different for each grower/property.

The destruction of plants is not required, but generally carriers of Panama TR4 (soil, equipment, machinery, etc.) must be handled in a way that prevents the movement of Panama TR4 from their place.

RPDs require compliance with the Code of Practice for Panama TR4 which can be found at abgcgrowersupport.com.au.

These procedures are tailored to the property. If the property grows multiple crops or grazes cattle, the notice may include additional requirements to minimise the risk of disease spread.

Under the the Act, a failure to comply with a notice may result in a failure to discharge your general biosecurity obligation.

Important to know: the Grower Support (Biosecurity) Team delivers surveillance under the Act. Biosecurity Queensland (BQ) is the regulator under the Act. Confirmed detections are managed collaboratively.

- The Grower Support (Biosecurity) Team notifies BQ when samples are taken under the Service Level Deed (SLD). Similarly, BQ notifies the Grower Support (Biosecurity) Team when a sample is taken under the Act.

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